



SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF NURSING
SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
4305 S. LOUISE AVENUE SUITE 201 ♦ SIOUX FALLS, SD 57106-3115
(605) 362-2760 ♦ FAX: 362-2768 ♦ www.state.sd.us/doh/nursing

FOREIGN EDUCATED LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES – LICENSURE BY EXAMINATION

[SDCL 36-9-29, 37, 38, 39](#) provide legal authority for South Dakota Board of Nursing to examine and license duly qualified applicants seeking to obtain a nursing license in South Dakota. Following are the procedures that must be followed for foreign-educated LPNs to obtain licensure in South Dakota by examination. It is illegal to practice nursing in South Dakota without valid nurse licensure. All fees are non-refundable.

A nurse who has graduated from a practical nursing education program in a foreign country and who has never been licensed as a Licensed Practical Nurse in the United States or a U.S. territory must meet these requirements:

1. Must have completed a government-approved four-year high school course of study or its equivalent.
2. Must be a graduate of a government-approved educational program leading to LPN licensure that meets the South Dakota nursing education requirements that were in place at the time the nurse graduated. South Dakota educational requirements include nursing theory and clinical instruction in: Adult Health; Maternal/Child Health; and Geriatric Nursing.
3. Request a Healthcare Profession and Science Course-by-Course Report from the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools to be sent directly to South Dakota Board of Nursing. This Report is obtained through Credential Evaluation Services. Online www.cgfns.org or by mail from CGFNS, 3600 Market Street Suite 400, Philadelphia PA 19104; tel (215)349-8767; fax 349-0026.
NOTE: Canadian applicants who were educated in English are exempt from this requirement.

4. Request that a Report from Test of English as a Foreign Language Services (www.ets.org/toefl/) documenting the passing score achieved on the examination be sent directly to SD Board of Nursing. TOEFL Services/Educational Testing Services, PO Box 6151, Princeton NJ 08541; tel (609) 771-7100. The English proficiency standard applies to licensed practical nurses (LPN), vocational nurses (VN), as well as registered nurses (RN).

Minimum passing scores are:
TOEFL written – overall score of 650
TOEFL CBT – overall score of 220
TOEFL IBT – overall score of 83

NOTE: Canadian applicants who were educated in English are exempt from this requirement.

5. Complete all application forms and submit with the required fees:
 - SD Board of Nursing [LPN Licensure Application](#) with \$100 fee payable to the Board of Nursing
 - Application to [Pearson](#) with the \$200 NCLEX® Registration fee



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6. Criminal Background Checks

1. Pursuant to SDCL 36-9-97, [ARSD 20:48:03:01:01](#), [ARSD 20:48:05:01](#), [ARSD 20:48:03:01](#), [ARSD 20:48:03:07](#), and [ARSD 20:48:03:08](#) each applicant for initial licensure is required to submit a full set of fingerprints with completed application to obtain a state and federal criminal background check.
 2. If you download an application from the website www.state.sd.us/doh/nursing and submit the completed application to the South Dakota Board of Nursing, fingerprint cards will be mailed to you.
 3. The fingerprint cards you receive from the SDBON **must** be the cards you use for fingerprints, since specific agency data are pre-printed on them.
 4. Contact your local law enforcement agency for fingerprinting.
 5. Send to the SD Board of Nursing office your completed fingerprint cards and a separate check or money order for \$44 payable to: South Dakota Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI).
 6. Your application will not be processed and/or temporary license will **not** be issued until your completed application **and** fingerprint cards are received.
 7. You will **not** receive a permanent license until the fingerprint results from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) are received by the Board, approximately 1-2 weeks.
 8. Cards will be rejected if bent, folded, tampered with, stained, smeared, or stapled. If rejected, you will be notified to resubmit your cards.
7. [Temporary Permits](#) are issued to first-time NCLEX®-PN writers only. Instructions and Application forms are available at the Board of Nursing website. Steps [3](#), [4](#) and [5](#) above must also be completed before a Temporary Permit can be issued; the Temporary Permit fee is \$25. While practicing nursing on a Temporary Permit, the applicant must use the initials “LPN App.” and must practice only under the supervision of a licensed registered nurse. The Temporary Permit is non-renewable, and expires ninety days following the date of issuance or upon notification to the applicant of the results of the examination. Those applicants who fail the exam must return the Temporary Permit to the Board of Nursing office.
8. Achieve a passing score on the NCLEX®-PN Computerized Adaptive Test. A Licensed Practical Nurse license will be issued and sent to the most recent address submitted in writing to the Board.